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Front Edit Other
Page Page Page

Date:

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Big Change in Kennedy; Better 'Set'

By Alvin Silverman

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PALM BEACH, Fla.—On

this Easter Day of 1962, appropriately enough, President Kennedy is better "set" mentally than at any time since he became President or, perhaps, than at any time ever.

He has confidence in himself and his associates, not immature cockiness, but rather a feeling of assurance that he and they now can cope with whatever situations develop.

Outward appearances to the contrary, it has not always been thus. Just one year ago, Mr. Kennedy vacationed in this city under personally more pleasant circumstances. His father was a vigorous, bubbly individual instead of a man trying desperately to cover from a stroke that left him powerless to walk or to move his right arm. The President himself, unaided by a bad back, then was unable to play golf.

Nevertheless, he was totally low, very low. The invasion fiasco was a couple of weeks ago. Laos was defeated. The Congo was in a state of anarchy. The Soviet Union was in space.

Moreover, the situation, as all knew, was because of the new front brought to Washington by the old man who had been into operation.



ALVIN SILVERMAN

A LESSER MAN than JFK may have been overwhelmed, beyond recovery by the Cuban fiasco alone. But the President came back swinging. As he told friends since: "Cuba was a mistake. My mistake. Miscalculations were made. We may make other mistakes but we never will make a mistake like that again."

It is true that Castro still is riding high in Cuba. It also is true, one year later, that the Organization of American States has put Cuba in a vise, the result of the United States push behind the Punta del Este resolution. And it also is true that not one of the three top men who headed the Central Intelligence Agency last April is with the CIA today.

Without question, the outcome of his encounter with the big steel companies has left President Kennedy in a happy frame of mind and added to his confidence and national stature.

Here, again, a lesser man could have been overwhelmed beyond recovery by his victory. But at his press conference Wednesday, before leaving the capital for a 10-day vacation here, the chief executive tried mightily to bury the hatchet and assure both the steel companies and big business in general that he was willing to let bygones be bygones.

THE PRESIDENT abjured vindictiveness and recriminations and emphasized that his administration harbors no ill will against any individual, any industry, corporation or segment of the American economy. His goal, he said, is dependent upon the success of both business and labor.

Although the standing of the steel industry rose through the President's face and remarks to his lie, it alone is not responsible for his new outlook. Things seem to be going better in the steel

CPYRGHT

phrased differently, the United States is not the only world power with grave problems. The Soviet Union also has its headaches, with food shortages, with Red China, with the young people and intellectuals seeking status.

THUS IT IS that President Kennedy is able now to relax a bit. While he can't play golf or engage in strenuous exercise, he can do several things that he enjoys for the first time. High on this list is the surprise you to him, a reward for fun.

Before congratulating ourselves on the peace and tranquility of this Easter Day, 1962, however, let us remember that President Kennedy also will be on his vacation when he let fly with the first atmospheric nuclear test the United States has conducted since 1958. It is the

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